

Art and Soul of Buckeye Community Park

Fact Sheet

SUMMER 2008

The Art and Soul of Buckeye Community Park (Art and Soul Park) has been newly laid out with added greenspace, improved circulation and utility, fresh landscaping, and four new public artworks. **ParkWorks**, in partnership with **Buckeye Area Development Corporation (BADC)**, **Neighborhood Progress, Inc. (NPI)**, **Cleveland Public Art (CPA)**, and the **Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA)**, implemented a comprehensive strategy for transforming the neighborhood park at the intersection of East 118th Street and Buckeye Road. The transformation improves the park's usefulness as both a venue for major community events and a backdrop for the everyday comings and goings of neighborhood life. Construction on the project concluded in July 2008, just in time for BADC's annual *Soul of Buckeye* series of music festivals.

Funders

Funding for the \$200,000 Art and Soul of Buckeye Community Park project was generously provided by the **Saint Luke's Foundation**, the **Charter One Foundation**, **Neighborhood Progress, Inc.**, **RTA**, the **Neighborhood Connections program of The Cleveland Foundation**, and the **City of Cleveland's City Works grant program**.

BADC is a participant in NPI's Strategic Investment Initiative, a program that has focused on creating "neighborhoods of choice" in six promising neighborhoods in the City of Cleveland through the use of strategic investment and planning.

Land for the park, which was established in the mid-1980s, was donated to the community by the Cleveland Chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women in 1983.

The Park

Though it has a new name, a small park has shared the southwest corner of Buckeye Road and E. 118th St. with a public parking lot for decades.

The park, which in recent years has become the focal point of a popular series of summer festivals, was showing its age and proving unwieldy as a festival ground. The parking lot, well used but rarely full, took up more than its share of space. As plans for redevelopment of the corner into Art and Soul Park progressed, it became apparent that the park could be expanded and the parking lot reconfigured and downsized.

The new Art and Soul Park is larger and more open than its predecessor and features a permanent stage, a winding and colorful art-covered seating wall with built-in chess boards, a pair of iconic sculptures, murals, and new landscaping that is lush and pleasing but less intrusive than the landscaping previously found on the site. ParkWorks engaged McKnight Associates, Ltd., a Cleveland landscape architecture firm, to lead the park's redesign.

Art and Soul Park also represents one of the first collaborations between RTA and a local community on the creation of an enhanced transit waiting environment, or TWE, which translates into a bus stop with added amenities and comforts. RTA is seeking to improve the waiting experiences of its customers at the more than 8,000 bus stops it maintains throughout Cuyahoga County. The bus stop that will be moved to Art and Soul Park from a nearby location serves the outbound No. 13 line.

The New Artwork

There are four new works of public art in and near the park. In 2007, two temporary (two- to five-year) mural installations were put in place on walls facing the park from the east and west. Two permanent artworks were added this year.

Buckeye Trumpet Man by James Simon

The 16-foot-tall Trumpet Man and the little dog watching him from afar are the iconic centerpieces of the park's new incarnation. With their massive scale and intricate details, the concrete sculptures, designed specifically for the site, are dramatic in the daylight and at night, when they are lighted from below.

Pittsburgh artist James Simon has been sculpting for 20 years, and his work can be found worldwide. His sculptures speak to a diverse population and range in size from small desktop pieces to large public art commissions. He works in a variety of mediums, including ceramic, concrete, bronze, and mosaic. (Photo source: Greg Ruffing)



Seating Wall by Angelica Pozo

Angelica Pozo's tiled seating wall and chessboards bring added color to the park and enhance its ability to visually engage park users and passersby. Various musical instruments, from the flugelhorn to the grand piano are playfully depicted in the tilework, and the work as a whole appears both formal and free spirited.



Angelica has lived in Cleveland since 1984. A full-time, self-employed artist, she divides her time among widely exhibited sculptural studio work, major public art commissions, and education-oriented artist residencies. She has been awarded individual-artist fellowships from the Ohio Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Buckeye Mural Project by Francisca Ugalde and Chip Carter

Two murals, on walls facing the park, were installed in 2007, in anticipation of the park's reconstruction. The two artists, painter Francisca Ugalde and photographer William "Chip" Carter, were chosen from among the nearly 20 artists who submitted proposals.

Francisca's colorful mural, a mix of painting and collage, went up in July 2007, and Chip's photo mural, made up of five individual pieces by him and associates Greg Ruffing and Scott Sykes, went up a few months later. Francisca's mural comprises several 4-by-8-foot panels stretching along a wall. She rented studio space in Midtown specifically to carry out this project. The photographs in Chip's installation are drawn from life in Buckeye and neighborhood life in general.

Chilean-born Francisca now lives, works, and attends school in Northeast Ohio. Chip, who is also a law professor, was a lifelong Clevelander before relocating to Philadelphia last year.

